

NOAA-EPA COASTAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

SUMMARY OF IMPLEMENTATION

March 2006

BACKGROUND

Since the signing of the NOAA/EPA Coastal Community Development MOA in January of 2005, significant progress has been made on the four priority projects identified by the Partners.

NOAA and EPA have worked to provide advice and assistance to our state and local partners to achieve national goals for sustainable management of coastal resources and protection of human health and the environment. We have accomplished this through greater integration and coordination between our offices and with enhanced communication from the federal agencies to the local implementers. Our governmental and NGO partners at regional, state and local levels need more capacity to plan and guide growth in an integrated, comprehensive and coordinated manner and the NOAA/EPA Coastal Community Development Partnership is helping to build that capacity.

STATUS OF PRIORITY PROJECTS

During this first formal year of the Partnership, EPA and NOAA have been focusing on the four priority projects detailed below. Additional projects have been identified that EPA and NOAA will work on as time and resources allow. More detailed information on the projects described below can be obtained directly from the contacts listed, or by contacting John Kuriawa (301.563.7202, john.kuriawa@noaa.gov) at NOAA or Tim Torma (202.566.2864, torma.tim@epa.gov) at EPA.

✓ Community Technical Assistance supporting local development efforts *[Tools and Technical Assistance]*

Coastal communities are interested in improving their quality of life, protecting their environmental resources, enhancing public health, and promoting responsible development, but many lack the tools, resources, or information to achieve these goals. Recognizing this, EPA and NOAA have begun a new initiative to give direct technical assistance from national experts, free of charge, to communities that want to incorporate smart growth techniques in their new or redevelopment projects.

Three communities were selected to receive assistance in October, 2005. Grant awards (in the amount of \$34K) were made in early 2006 to Pamlico County, North Carolina; Houston, Texas; and Wells, Maine. These projects will bring teams of national experts together to work with local communities and Sea Grant extension personnel to address community-identified needs for land use policy assistance.

A second Request for Applications (RFA) for community development assistance, also jointly sponsored by NOAA Sea Grant and EPA, was announced on November 3, 2005. Sea Grant programs are eligible to apply for the grants in partnership with local communities. More information is available through Lynn Richards (richards.lynn@epa.gov). The NOAA/EPA RFA was announced simultaneously with two closely related assistance initiatives: 1) EPA's smart growth implementation RFA, which is open to local communities in both coastal and non-coastal areas; 2) The American Institute of Architects' RFP, also open to all communities, with an emphasis on sustainable design.

✓ **Promoting university-based technical assistance and feedback via Sea Grant by enhancing the Coastal Community Development Program**
[Tools and Technical Assistance]

In 2001, NOAA created the Coastal Community Development Program (CCDP) within its National Sea Grant Extension Network. The purpose of the CCDP is to provide leadership in helping coastal communities address all issues related to land use, economic development and coastal resources. This new program builds off the successes and existing infrastructure of Sea Grant programs and tackles one of the largest threats to coastal resources—the expansion of built environments in coastal areas. The CCDP is supported with \$50K/annually from the national Sea Grant office to each Sea Grant College Program, which is leveraged considerably with additional funding and in-kind support by each university program.

In 2005, the National Sea Grant College Office hired a Coastal Community Development National Coordinator to help develop and provide focus for the Sea Grant CCDP, to help facilitate the exchange of information and ideas among agents and others working on coastal community development, and to increase the capacity of agents and others addressing growth and development issues. The coordinator, Amy Zimmerling, in cooperation with the Partnership coordinating committee members, has been instrumental in:

- ❑ Incorporating coastal community development as a primary theme of Sea Grant Week in 2005, and highlighting the CCDP at national conferences focusing on coastal issues and community development.
- ❑ Developing and distributing bi-weekly CCD Bulletins on issues of concern to the network.
- ❑ Organizing a national meeting for CCD extension personnel, including training from NOAA's Coastal Services Center on "collaborative processes".
- ❑ Initiating the ongoing NOAA Smart Growth Speaker Series.
- ❑ Leading the refinement of a white paper on the CCDP mission and future directions for enhancement and expansion of the program.
- ❑ Providing analysis and other support for a comprehensive CCDP review, which includes an EPA expert on the advisory panel.

✓ **Developing and delivering training for state and local government officials**
[Outreach and Education]

There are many state and local officials who have a general sense of what better coastal growth entails but who seek a deeper understanding to implement the principles associated with smart coastal development. To build this capacity, NOAA and EPA are developing a training curriculum and will work with state and local partners to deliver the training. The purpose of the training is to enable participants to enhance coastal planning and development in their community. The target audience will be local and regional decision-makers and planners, however, NOAA and EPA will partner with state coastal resource offices to deliver the training most effectively. The training is expected to help attendees:

- Understand coastal development patterns, and trends;
- Understand the social, environmental, and economic impacts and benefits of various development patterns;
- Understand the characteristics of successful communities;
- Identify potential partners;

- Increase their knowledge about effectively communicating on this topic;
- Increase their ability to identify new resources (money, technical assistance, documents) to provide information on or assistance with coastal growth and development projects; and
- Understand how the drivers influence growth and development patterns.

Through this Partnership, EPA and NOAA have accomplished the following steps towards creating a Coastal Community Planning and Development Training:

- ☐ Identified the intended audience as local and regional decision-makers and planners.
- ☐ Conducted a needs assessment of our partners and our target audience at the state and local level to determine the scope and content of the training.
- ☐ Described the project outcomes in terms of short, mid, and long-term goals.
- ☐ Collected training content and materials from project partners.
- ☐ Outlined and drafted priority modules based on critical concepts identified in the needs assessment.
- ☐ Initiated the incorporation of instructional design components into the training sessions.
- ☐ Targeting a pilot “dry run” for the training in March 2006.

✓ **Explaining how better approaches to coastal development help meet Clean Water Act and Coastal Zone Management Act requirements**
[Policy Analysis]

Across the country, cities, regions and states are recognizing that new and enhanced growth strategies can be effective in protecting environmental quality and while promoting coastal community economic development. Specifically, growth and development approaches can be used to meet some water quality and coastal resource protection goals contained in the Clean Water Act (CWA) and Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA).

NOAA and EPA, in conjunction with leading policy experts, have drafted a policy document designed to highlight ways in which smart growth principles can be used to meet the goals of environmental statutes. The document, targeted to governors and state agency leaders, is undergoing final reviews with an expected completion date of June 2006. The publication will focus on the most innovative and pragmatic ways to use State policies under the CWA and CZMA to identify opportunities where better approaches to coastal development will help meet local, state, or federal requirements. The report will also suggest specific actions that can be undertaken to modify existing regulations and guidance documents in ways that promote smarter and safer coastal development and achieve superior environmental results.